<u>What is Claimed is</u>:

1.   A system for handling data requests in a distributed data delivery network, the system comprising:

5   a data resource request modifier, adapted to intercept and modify a data resource request issued by a user requesting data from said network prior to said data resource request reaching a data server in said network, to create a modified data resource request; and

a data delivery device, adapted to control routing of requested data from a data server in said distributed data delivery network to said user based on said modified data resource

10   request.

2.   A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein:

said data resource request includes a data resource request metafile;

said data resource request modifier is adapted to modify said data resource request

15   metafile to create a modified data resource request metafile included in said modified data resource request; and

said data delivery device is adapted to control routing of said requested data from said data server based on said modified data resource request metafile.

20   3.   A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein:

said data delivery device issues a response to said user based on said modified data resource request to enable said user to receive said requested data from said data server.

4.   A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein:

25   said modified data resource request includes data identifying said data server as the data server from which said requested data is to be provided to said user.

5.   A system as claimed in claim 4, wherein:

said data server identified by said data in said modified data resource request is

30   different from a data server identified by data in said data resource request prior to modification.

6.   A system for handling a response to a data request in a distributed data delivery network, the system comprising:

a data response modifier, adapted to intercept and modify a data response issued by a data server in said network in response to a data resource request issued by a user requesting

5   data from said network, before said response reaches said user, to create a modified data response; and

a data delivery device, adapted to control routing of requested data from a data server in said distributed data delivery network to said user based on said modified data response.

10   7.   A system as claimed in claim 6, wherein:

said data response includes a data response metafile;

said data response modifier is adapted to modify said data response metafile to create a modified data response metafile included in said modified data response; and

said data delivery device is adapted to control routing of said requested data from

15   said data server based on said modified data response metafile.

8.   A system as claimed in claim 6, wherein:

said data delivery device issues said modified data response to enable said user to receive said requested data from said data server.

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9.   A system as claimed in claim 6, wherein:

said modified data response includes data identifying said data server as the data server from which said requested data is to be provided to said user.

25   10.   A system as claimed in claim 9, wherein:

said data server identified by said data in said modified data response is different from a data server identified by data in said data response prior to modification.

11.   A method for handling data requests in a distributed data delivery network,

30   the method comprising:

intercepting and modifying a data resource request issued by a user requesting data from said network prior to said data resource request reaching a data server in said network, to create a modified data resource request; and

controlling routing of requested data from a data server in said distributed data

5 delivery network to said user based on said modified data resource request.

12. A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein:

said data resource request includes a data resource request metafile;

said data resource request modifying step includes modifying said data resource

10 request metafile to create a modified data resource request metafile included in said modified data resource request; and

said controlling step includes controlling routing of said requested data from said data server based on said modified data resource request metafile.

15 13. A method as claimed in claim 11, further comprising:

issuing a response to said user based on said modified data resource request to enable said user to receive said requested data from said data server.

14. A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein:

20 said modified data resource request includes data identifying said data server as the data server from which said requested data is to be provided to said user.

15. A method as claimed in claim 14, wherein:

said data server identified by said data in said modified data resource request is

25 different from a data server identified by data in said data resource request prior to modification.

16. A method for handling a response to a data request in a distributed data delivery network, the system comprising:

30 intercepting and modifying a data response issued by a data server in said network in response to a data resource request issued by a user requesting data from said network, before said response reaches said user, to create a modified data response; and

controlling routing of requested data from a data server in said distributed data delivery network to said user based on said modified data response.

17.   A method as claimed in claim 16, wherein:

said data response includes a data response metafile;

said data response modifying step includes modifying said data response metafile to create a modified data response metafile included in said modified data response; and

said controlling step includes controlling routing of said requested data from said data server based on said modified data response metafile.

18.   A method as claimed in claim 16, further comprising:

issuing said modified data response to enable said user to receive said requested data from said data server.

19.   A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein:

said modified data response includes data identifying said data server as the data server from which said requested data is to be provided to said user.

20.   A method as claimed in claim 19, wherein:

said data server identified by said data in said modified data response is different from a data server identified by data in said data response prior to modification.